

Summer 6-15-2003

# ENG 2011G-021: Literature , self, and the world: Fiction

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**Summer Session II (July 14-August 6)****ENG 2011G.021****Literature, Self and the World: Fiction****Michael Loudon****M-F 10:30-12:30****CH3150 Phone: 6312****E-mail: [cfmdl@eiu.edu](mailto:cfmdl@eiu.edu)**

**Description:** We shall begin with two novels of the early 20<sup>th</sup> C American South, comparing points of view and the techniques of fiction as they are embodied in William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. As we consider the two writers' abilities to evoke place and history, to create meaning and identity through characterization, and to provoke our reflections on family and relationships, we shall further consider what these themes and techniques suggest about our contemporary actions and decisions. Departing from these novels, we shall then turn to the American Southwest and Leslie Marmon Silko's quest in *Ceremony* to define her protagonist's identity in a complex, "exotic" cultural atmosphere and to ponder how Silko constructs her geographical and historical setting. Finally, we shall turn back east to read Trinidadian Earl Lovelace's novel *The Dragon Can't Dance* in which the collision of a creole world with that of a developing new nation evokes the qualities of love that define friendship.

**Course Format:** With the goals of critical reading and thinking as principal course objectives, I shall provide critical contexts for the novels. As your reading progresses, you will be asked to assume increasing responsibilities for discussion of your observations and insights. There will be weekly reading quizzes over each novel, and students will be expected to take formal charge of discussions for at least one novel.

**Prerequisite:** All students must have completed ENG 1002G, 1092G or the equivalent.

**Requirements:** A willingness for daily, engaged conversation on the readings and related issues, including reading quizzes (40%), two critical essays of four-to-five pages each (40%) and a final, essay examination (20%) will comprise the course grading.

**Course Texts:**William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying* (1930)Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)Earl Lovelace, *The Dragon Can't Dance* (1979)Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (1977)**Office Hours:** Michael Loudon Phone: 6312 Office: CH3361 (314D)

MTRF 10:00-10:30; 12:30-1:00; W 10:30-12:30;

or by appointment.

(Please see "General Policies" on the other side.)

**General Policies:**

Grading Standards: I shall follow the EIU English Department Guidelines, distributed in class. In all cases, I shall use a plus and minus system to distinguish, say, a high B from a low one.

Attendance: I do take roll, and I evaluate attendance only indirectly in the context of your participation in the course.

Conferences: These are at your request unless I ask to see you. Please ask for help as soon as you feel you need it; please don't wait until the last couple of weeks of class.

Submission of work: Essays should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of the paper only, titled and indicate the following: name, date, course and section number. Essay exams and quizzes must be legible.

Late Essays: For each day that the essay is late, the letter grade will fall by one full grade: an A essay due on Friday will be an F by the next Thursday. If there are particular difficulties, please see me.

**Plagiarism:** The English Department Policy

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism--"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and the representation of them as one's own original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

If I discover an act of plagiarism, I shall exercise the right to the fullest extent possible. (See *The Blair Handbook*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 233-248, for a further discussion of what constitutes plagiarism and how to integrate properly your material from sources.)

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Obviously, any act of cheating other than plagiarism will also carry an academic penalty, that to be determined by Judicial Affairs, depending upon the dishonest act and the circumstances.

**Information for Students with Disabilities:**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

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Literature, Self and the World: Fiction  
Michael Loudon

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*English 2011G: Syllabus*

*July*

M 14: Course introduction (Fiction, narrative and the text)  
T 15: *As I Lay Dying* (read at least to p. 74 [Modern Library  
edition, p. 79]: "Vardaman": "My mother is a fish."  
W 16: Reading day  
R 17: *As I Lay Dying* (reading quiz)  
F 18: Discussion (essay #1 assigned)

M 21: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*  
T 22: (continued)  
W 23: Reading day  
R 24: *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (reading quiz)  
F 25: Discussion

M 28: Ceremony (**Essay #1 due.**) (essay #2 assigned)  
T 29: (continued)  
W 30: Reading day  
R 31: Ceremony (reading quiz); discussion

*August*

F 1: *The Dragon Can't Dance*  
  
M 4: (continued)  
T 5: *The Dragon Can't Dance* (reading quiz); discussion  
W 6: **Final examination (Essay #2 due.)**

**Discussion groups:** Individuals in each group should pose questions (and speculate on their responses) regarding what interests them in the assigned text about the elements and issues revealed in the critical reading. Among the considerations might be: the structure of the novel, its techniques in crafting the fiction—characterization, setting, dialogue, description and symbolism, for example—the thematic concerns, and the relevance to contemporary issues. Those students who are not charged with leading discussions are nonetheless expected to have a command of the text and participate in the discussions.

***As I Lay Dying*** (F 7/18): Lee Burke, Gavin Grimm, Jennifer Keck, Courtney Shepard and Joseph Bolton

***Their Eyes Were Watching God*** (F 7/25): Amy Callahan, Stephanie Hackett, Amy Lynch, Stratia Stein and Michael Bujnak

***Ceremony*** (R 7/31): Charles Dooley, Matt Holben, Diane Romoser and Kelly Tribout

***The Dragon Can't Dance*** (T 8/5): Julie Gable, Linnea Kacanowski, Anesha Leach and Patricia Blackburn